



## SHALVA Commemorates 30 Years

SHALVA will celebrate its 30th anniversary of service to the Jewish community with special recognition at its annual luncheon in June and throughout this year.

Founding Mother Fayge Siegal recalls the small group of women who were invited to a meeting with Rebbetzin Chana Weinberg of Baltimore to discuss the domestic abuse problem in the Chicago Jewish community. "She urged us to 'Do something about it,'" Siegal reminisces. "It was a mandate." The Founding Mothers did not know exactly what they needed to do, but they educated themselves about the issues and assessed the help that was available. "Our goal then and now is to enable women to take charge of their lives," said Siegal. She remembers "many moments of great satisfaction" from the difficult but rewarding work of building SHALVA. "At board meetings, we hear of women who have overcome great obstacles; we hear of new legislation, increased involvement of rabbis and an enormous amount of progress overall." SHALVA continues to evolve to better meet the needs of the Jewish community and Siegal is still passionate about her work in the organization. "We must continue to 'do something' about domestic abuse in the Jewish community."



## New Staff Joins SHALVA

SHALVA welcomes four new outreach staff members to its growing community: Rochel Ray, Orthodox Outreach Coordinator; Viki Rivkin, Outreach and Education Legal Liaison; Samantha Spolter, "Under 40" Outreach Coordinator, and Deborah Zionts, General Education and Outreach Coordinator.



Pictured left to right - Viki Rivkin, Deborah Zionts and Samantha Spolter

## SHALVA Educates Local Lawyers

On Thursday, March 17, 2016, SHALVA staff presented to the Decalogue Society of Lawyers for a special Women's History Month and Purim Continuing Legal Education program on Domestic Violence in the Jewish Community. The presentation covered divorce and custody proceedings when representing a survivor of domestic abuse. Barbara Siegel, SHALVA Clinical Director, described the various forms of domestic abuse and how abusers use the court system to continue their power and control over their partner. Rosemary McKillip, SHALVA In-House Legal Liaison, discussed the recent changes to the Illinois Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act and recent court decisions. Viki Rivkin, SHALVA Outreach and Education Legal Liaison, explained how the Legal Liaison program works and how attorneys can become involved. Thank you to the Decalogue Society for supporting our Legal Program and for publishing important domestic abuse information in your newsletter. [Click here for the newsletter article](#)



This Program is supported by the Jewish Women's Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, Jewish United Fund and the Adrienne Reiner Hochstadt Memorial Fund.



## Custody Has a New Name

As Illinois divorce law evolves, SHALVA's Legal Program keeps the Jewish community informed. As of January 1, 2016, "the term custody no longer exists in the law" explains



Rosemary McKillip, SHALVA's In-House Legal Liaison. "Financial circumstances of both parents should be considered by the courts in deciding parenting issues." Courts now refer to the "allocation of parental responsibilities and parenting time" when deciding who has responsibility for making decisions regarding the child's care, who spends time with the child and where the child lives. McKillip hopes that the changes to the law will ensure that children do not have changes to their safety and comfort because they live with Mom half the time and Dad half the time.

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## Orthodox Rabbinic Task Force Launches

In an ongoing effort to increase resources for domestic abuse victims within the Orthodox community, SHALVA announces the formation of its Orthodox Rabbinic Task Force. The Task Force will be comprised of a consortium of Orthodox Rabbis who will work in collaboration with SHALVA therapists to offer additional support within the Orthodox community. A woman seeking guidance from an Orthodox Rabbi other than her own will now have access to select Orthodox rabbis for consultation.



The Orthodox Rabbinic Task Force launched its first training session in February with renowned Rabbi Avrohom Union, Dayan and Menahel of the Beth Din of the Rabbinical Council of California. He addressed Chicago Orthodox rabbis, rebbetzins and educators about awareness of and sensitivity to domestic abuse issues within the Orthodox Community. Former SHALVA Orthodox Outreach Coordinator, Esther Yona Friedman expressed gratitude to the Chicago Rabbinic Community for their support and commitment. "We are fortunate to have amazing connections with Orthodox rabbis in Chicago and look forward to continued collaboration regarding the unique needs of Orthodox families facing issues of domestic abuse."

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**Join us at Our Annual Luncheon**



**WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CHILDREN?**

58,000 children are forced to live with their abusive parent each year.

*Learn one family's story...*

Join us for special presentations by producer **Garland Waller**, who recounts the dramatic story of Holly Collins and her family in the documentary *No Way Out But One* and **Jennifer Collins**, who, as a young girl, was removed from Holly Collins' care and placed with her abusive father.

**Film Screening** of *No Way Out But One* prior to the luncheon. Details to follow.



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A partner with the Jewish United Fund in serving our community

SHALVA addresses domestic abuse in Jewish homes and relationships through counseling and education.

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